



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

Washington Agricultural Statistics Service
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Washington Crop Weather

Released: September 29, 2003, 1:00 p.m.
Week Ending: September 28, 2003
CWP WA-CW3903

Palouse Farmers Dust In Winter Wheat Seed Warm Weather Slowed Potato Harvest in Columbia Basin

Field Crops

Warm weather and dry conditions returned for another week. Palouse farmers continued to dust in winter wheat seed to the dry soils while others worked stubble ground. Precipitation is needed to support seedling growth. In Skagit County, no late blight on potatoes has been reported so far. Warm weather in the Columbia Basin has slowed potato harvest.

Livestock

Rainfall is still needed on many pastures across the state to improve condition. In Thurston County, livestock producers were cross fencing pastures while in Stevens County, calves continued to move to the market at good prices. Range and pasture conditions were 14% very poor, 29% poor, 41% fair, and 16% good.

Fruits and Vegetables

Harvest of Red Delicious apples was well underway around the Yakima Valley with warm weather attributing to poor fruit coloring. Around western Washington, warmer temperatures provided ideal conditions to wrap up sweet corn harvest and sow winter cover crops in the recently harvested fields. Also in the region, harvest continued on cauliflower, broccoli, and late blueberries. Warm temperatures and minimal rainfall also pleased U-Pick pumpkin growers with dry fields and good conditions for color development.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	6.9
Last Week	6.5

Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	26	39	35	0
Subsoil	16	34	50	0
Irrigation Water	7	10	83	0
Hay & Roughage	3	9	74	14

VS=Very Short SH=Short AD=Adequate S=Surplus

Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2002	5 Yr. Avg.
Winter Wheat Planted	72	55	78	69
Winter Wheat Emerged	36	24	52	48
Potatoes Harvested	56	50	70	52
Corn Silage Harvested	44	43	48	53
Dry Edible Beans Harvested	90	65	38	49
Alfalfa Hay 3rd Cutting	98	98	100	100

Crop Condition*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Corn	0	1	8	91	0

VP=Very Poor P=Poor F=Fair G=Good EX=Excellent

* Crop conditions are a measurement of the growing conditions and are not indicative of the quality of the crop produced.

COUNTY COMMENTS

Western

Grays Harbor: Ag producers were jubilant with a week of absolutely gorgeous weather. Eighty degree plus temperatures over the weekend broke all previous records. Sweet corn harvest was nearly finished. The dry conditions provided ideal harvest conditions with no reports of trucks or tractors getting stuck. U-Pick pumpkin growers reported the warm, sunny conditions provided perfect conditions for color development. Christmas tree growers continued preparing fields for harvest. Sweet corn growers took advantage of dry soil conditions to sow winter cover crops in recently harvested fields. The dry conditions continued to be ideal for the development of fall color on native trees and shrubs.

Grays Harbor/Lewis: Record warm temperatures occurred during the latter half of the week.

Kitsap: Unusually warm temperatures added to already dry pasture conditions. Fall produce, including pumpkins, squash, and potatoes were a great addition to area Farmer's Markets.

Pierce/South King: The weather has been good for crops in general. There were no unusual situations to report and no reports of crop damage due to a weather event. Rain is needed.

Skagit: Yet another week with no measurable precipitation. Harvest continued on potatoes, cauliflower, broccoli, apples, and late blueberries. No late blight was reported in potatoes or tomatoes.

Snohomish/King: An extra week of summer was enjoyed by all. Cooler nights and very dry conditions have slowed the growth on the few crops that were left to be harvested. Pumpkin patches, corn mazes, and vegetable stands were ready for fall visitors. Most Farmer's Markets have wrapped up the season or will in the next week.

Thurston: A week of spectacular weather provided ag producers with the perfect environment for completing a myriad of fall chores prior to the rainy season. Unseasonably warm temperatures in the lower 80's over the weekend, had ag producers thinking summer had returned. Livestock producers were cross fencing pastures. Christmas tree growers continued to prepare harvest roads. U-Pick pumpkin farms were pleased that a minimum amount of rainfall has left fields very dry for the opening day, October 1.

Whatcom: The weather has been very nice with temperatures back up in the high 70's. Corn silage and potato harvests continued. Apple harvest was underway.

Central

Franklin: Harvest of potatoes, carrots, dry beans, and sweet corn continued. The fourth cutting of alfalfa was underway. Soil fumigation progressed.

Grant: Warm days were slowing the potato harvest. Alfalfa seed harvest was complete. The yield was down 15 percent from 2002, as a result of the high temperatures in July. The fourth cutting of alfalfa was 60 percent complete.

Okanogan/Ferry: Apple harvest was well underway.

Most of the third cutting of alfalfa has been cut.

Yakima: Red Delicious apple harvest was underway. The quality was good. Less apples were being picked than earlier estimated. Very warm conditions were not ideal for fruit coloring.

Yakima (2nd Report): Average temperatures ranged from 4 to 16 degrees above normal, with no precipitation. No new crop losses due to weather conditions were reported.

Eastern

Adams: Precipitation is needed as both surface and subsoil moisture continued to be in short supply. Winter wheat was mostly emerged but was small after delayed seeding and reseeding.

Asotin/Garfield: Planting of winter wheat was in full swing. Unseasonably hot temperatures with no rain were seen all week. Planting conditions were good in some areas, due to the rain in early September. Other areas were too dry for proper seed germination this fall. Some producers were delaying planting, waiting for rain, while others were dusting it in. Rangeland and pastures needed rain for fall regrowth.

Lincoln: Dry conditions persisted and moisture levels were lowered. Winter wheat seeding was nearing completion and was roughly 50 percent emerged.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: Another week of no rain and above average temperatures. Some dusting in of winter wheat took place, but there does not seem to be enough moisture to support growth. Pasture conditions continued to decline.

Stevens: Hay producers were wrapping up the third cutting. Calves continued to move to market at good

prices.

Walla Walla: Warm days and cool nights provided good conditions for alfalfa hay producers. Deep furrow fall seeded crops were looking good. The area was still considered to be in drought conditions.

Whitman: Another week of sunny, dry conditions enabled fieldwork to move rapidly. Winter wheat seeding was in full swing during the week, with many farmers finishing up while others were at mid-point. Dry soil conditions were a concern, but most farmers simply dusted in the seed. In spite of prevailing dry conditions, some winter wheat has emerged--but rainfall is needed. Grazing conditions for livestock were mostly fair to poor, but forage supplies seemed to be more than adequate to meet expected needs.

Whitman (2nd Report): After a rainy start to the month, conditions have reverted back to the hot dry pattern experienced in the previous three months. Producers continued to seed winter wheat and some operations have wrapped up fall tillage operations. Most of the county continued to split tractor time between working stubble ground and seeding winter wheat.

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Weekly Weather Statistics

September 29, 2003

Station	Air Temperature				Growing Degree Days				Last Week Precipitation			Season Precipitation			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	Base 50F		Base 60F		Total			Total		% Normal	Days
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	Inches	DFN	Days	Inches	DFN		
WEST															
Bellingham	42	87	61	6	76	37	14	13	0.00	-0.52	0	0.68	-1.10	38	6
Everett	50	79	62	7	88	45	18	15	0.00	-0.56	0	0.71	-1.28	36	7
Hoquiam	46	88	61	3	81	20	21	10	0.00	-0.91	0	2.94	-0.03	99	9
Kelso	48	88	66	9	115	56	45	34	0.00	-0.62	0	0.00	-2.19	0	0
Olympia	42	85	62	8	86	46	18	17	0.00	-0.61	0	1.22	-0.86	59	9
Sea-Tac	52	84	66	8	111	53	41	33	0.00	-0.49	0	0.48	-1.26	28	8
Shelton	41	91	64	7	97	43	27	18	0.00	-0.75	0	1.12	-1.33	46	9
Tacoma	43	84	62	5	84	33	15	8	0.00	-0.49	0	1.37	-0.42	77	9
Vancouver	49	95	68	11	126	71	56	47	0.00	-0.49	0	1.04	-0.81	56	6
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	40	88	66	12	116	74	46	38	0.00	-0.07	0	0.00	-0.47	0	0
Omak	40	90	69	15	132	92	62	54	0.00	-0.14	0	0.35	-0.40	47	4
Stampede Pass	45	75	60	14	72	61	13	13	0.00	-0.93	0	4.51	1.36	143	8
Wenatchee	48	86	70	11	139	71	69	49	0.00	-0.07	0	0.00	-0.38	0	0
Yakima AP	38	89	67	10	119	64	49	35	0.00	-0.07	0	0.05	-0.33	13	1
NORTHEAST															
Colville	38	93	66	13	110	75	40	33	0.00	-0.23	0	0.56	-0.51	52	2
Deer Park	32	83	62	7	82	39	19	9	0.00	-0.20	0	1.27	0.44	153	3
Spokane AP	45	83	65	10	104	60	34	24	0.00	-0.14	0	0.58	-0.11	84	3
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	44	89	71	11	152	77	82	58	0.00	-0.07	0	0.21	-0.13	62	1
Moses Lake	41	90	67	8	123	48	53	29	0.00	-0.07	0	0.19	-0.15	56	2
Quincy	43	86	70	12	138	78	68	51	0.00	-0.07	0	0.07	-0.34	17	1
Ritzville	42	86	65	9	104	55	36	25	0.00	-0.14	0	0.43	-0.09	83	2
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	42	93	72	9	159	63	89	52	0.00	-0.07	0	0.24	-0.09	73	1
Pasco	42	91	67	7	120	44	50	26	0.00	-0.07	0	0.24	-0.10	71	2
Pullman	40	83	61	7	80	37	14	5	0.00	-0.28	0	0.92	0.00	100	5
Whitman Miss.	38	88	63	6	91	34	24	9	0.00	-0.20	0	1.26	0.64	203	4
ID PANHANDLE															
Coeur D'A' AP	41	81	63	6	90	39	26	14	0.18	-0.10	1	1.57	0.45	140	5
Lewiston ID	47	87	68	8	129	55	59	34	0.00	-0.16	0	1.05	0.33	146	4

Summary based on NWS data.

Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Wednesday September 1, 2002

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).

NA = Data Unavailable

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.

Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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